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7th Annual

KENTUCKY LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT



The Food
Connection



May 21st - 22nd, 2025

THE FOOD CONNECTION AT UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY | FASIG-TIPTON

Local Food Systems Advocacy + Action:

What does advocacy and action look like in the every day
AND in the big food systems changing way?



Tallgrass
FARM
FOUNDATION

SCHEDULE



Wednesday, May 21st @The 90 @UK

12:30-1:30 PM – Registration/Check-in

1:30-2:00 PM – Welcome + Overview of the Afternoon

2:15-3:15 PM – Concurrent Breakout Session A

Locally Foraged – Tanya Whitehouse (The Food Connection + UK Cooperative Extension) + Tem Burikhanov (The Food Connection) + Whitney Johnson (The Appalachian Forager)
The Food Connection Kitchen Room 234

Local Food is Medicine – Jessica Klein (KY Policy), Michelle Howell (Need More Acres), Heather Norman-Burgdolf (University of Kentucky), Bree Pearsall (Rootbound Farm), moderated by Brooke Gentile (Organic Association of Kentucky)
Room 202

Conscious Collaboration – Elliott Smith (Kitchen Sync Strategies)
Room 203

3:15-3:30PM Break

3:30-4:30 PM– Concurrent Breakout Session B

Locally Foraged – Tanya Whitehouse (The Food Connection + UK Cooperative Extension) + Tem Burikhanov (The Food Connection) + Whitney Johnson (The Appalachian Forager)
The Food Connection Kitchen Room 234

Scaling Local Food: Federal Investments, Alternative Funding, and Infrastructure Realities – Anna Haas (What Chefs Want), Birch Bragg (Locals Food Hub and Pizza Pub), Myrisa Christy (Community Farm Alliance), Evan Tate (T8 Cattle Company), moderated by Brandi Button-Johnson (The Food Connection)
Room 202

Emerging Trends Shaping the Future of Local Food Systems – Brent Lackey (Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development), Tim Woods (University of Kentucky), Laurie White (Community Farm Alliance), Jodee Smith (Indiana University), moderated by Faye Kuosman (UK Dining)
Room 203

4:30-6:00 PM – The Food Connection Award Ceremony and Reception

Fresh Food Company Dining Hall (1st floor)

Join us for locally sourced bites and cocktails, networking, and a celebration of 2025 awardees of The Food Connection’s Bill Best Award, Innovator Award, and Legacy Award.



There are only a few tickets left for this year’s F.E.A.S.T., so don’t wait! Head over to the link now to secure your spot at this unforgettable celebration and support FoodChain’s impactful work. Join us in strengthening local food systems and making a difference in the community. Learn more about their mission and grab your ticket here: <https://foodchainlex.org/>



Thursday, May 22nd @Fasig-Tipton

8:00-9:00 AM – Registration/Check-in

Sales Arena Lobby

9:00-9:15 AM – Welcome + Overview of Day, Ashton Potter (The Food Connection) and Leandra Forman (FoodChain)
Sales Arena

9:15am-10:15 AM Building Community, Resiliency, and Transformative Change From a Farmer’s Perspective – Tatum Lewis (Black Roots Farm), Bree Pearsall (Rootbound Farm), Joseph Fischer (Fischer Farms), Christine Chol (Need More Acres Farm), moderated by Jodee Smith (Indiana University)
Sales Arena

10:15-10:45 AM Break

10:45-11:45 AM Pulling Back the Curtain on the Bottom Line: Building Community, Resiliency, and Transformative Change From a Chef’s Perspective – Ouita Michel (Holly Hill Inn Family of Restaurants Lexington, KY), Joy Crump (FOODE Mercantile Fredericksburg, VA), Jamilka Borges (Lilith Pittsburgh, PA), Sara Bradley (Freight House Paducah, KY), Toa Green (Crank and Boom Lexington, KY), moderated by Ali Blair (Rebel Rebel, The Village Trough, Berea, KY)
Sales Arena

11:45 AM-1:15 PM Kentucky Proud Lunch Buffet

Windy Corner Room

Lunch Menu - Kentucky Proud Green Salad with smoked tomato ranch and sorghum vinaigrette, Classic Pork BBQ with Buns, Cole Slaw, Asparagus, Potato Salad, Pickled Beets, Carrots and Cucumbers, Cornbread, Fruit Crisp

1:15-2:00 PM Keynote Presentation – Building food systems through policy, advocacy, and community organizing - Paula Daniels (LA County Office of Local Food Systems)
Sales Arena

2:00-2:30 PM Morning Recap + Instructions for Working Group Sessions

Sales Arena

2:45-4:15 PM Breakout Working Group Sessions

The goal of these breakout working group sessions is to collectively cultivate creative solutions to local food systems challenges and walk away with personal commitments to building a more vibrant and equitable local food system.

- Breakout 1 – Cultivating Inclusion and access in our food system: how do we build spaces where chefs, farmers, food advocates, and practitioners are working towards solutions? (Moderators: Tanya Whitehouse and Tiffany Bellfield El-Amin)
Sales Arena
- Breakout 2 – Why local food needs to be on the table for institutional purchasing and Food is Medicine initiatives. Moderators: Brandi Button-Johnson, Faye Kuosman, Heather Graham
Sales Arena Bar, 2nd floor
- Breakout 3 – Youth Voices in Agriculture. Moderators: Kristin Hughes, Ciera Davis, Farmer Brown, Christine Chol
Kentucky Room

2025 Kentucky Local Food Systems Summit Evaluation Survey Help us improve future events by completing this brief survey!



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#KYLFSS2025